

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Contributed by "M. A. (Oxon.)"

Under the title, "A London Lourdes," the *Pall Mall Gazette* prints a letter detailing some singular cures by the sole means of "the prayer of faith." The Rev. W. E. Boardman is at the head of the mission which is located in a house called Bethshan in the north of London, and the alleged cures are very remarkable. The anonymous correspondent has "been present at more than one of their meetings, and has heard many personal testimonies to a complete cure from almost 'all the ills that flesh is heir to.'" The mission has been in existence six months, and Mr. Boardman states that "there have been about one hundred remarkable cures, including every variety of disease, cancer, paralysis, deafness, consumption, chronic rheumatism, and lameness, many trophies, in the form of crutches, being left behind." No medicines are administered; only implicit faith is exacted. "Many of the cures," we are oddly told, "are said to have been effected by correspondence. The patient is usually anointed with oil, and, after prayer, an immediate cure is looked for." This is peremptory. One would like to know in what proportion of cases the expectation is realised. This whole question of psychopathy is well worth carefully sifting. I propose to return to it shortly. Meantime, I should like Bethshan looked into.

The *Theosophist* does me the honour of reprinting entire my review of "The Stars and the Earth," a courtesy for which my acknowledgments are due, and asks, whether I "suspect its author." Beyond the fact that the MS. arrived at Messrs. Balliere's with a £50 note to pay for publication, my knowledge does not go. I should be glad to know who is the writer of what I think a very remarkable booklet.

I note that the headquarters of the Theosophical Society are about to be moved from Breach Candy, Bombay, to Adyar, Madras, which is the address in the future to which all communications are to be sent. It is pleasant to congratulate our friends on this move, which is a resultant necessity of increased usefulness. The spread of the T. S. in India exceeds all anticipation.

The receipt of the first Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research leads the *Theosophist* to remark a series of coincidences. The first meeting of the S.P.R. was held "as, seven years before, the first meeting of the T.S. was held, on the *seventeenth* of the month: in July, the *seventh* month of the year: and the members then numbered *seventy-five*." "Omen faustum," remarks the *Theosophist*. "Amen," say I.

The December number of the *Theosophist* contains a remarkable article entitled, "Letters on Theosophy; the

Secret Doctrine"—in which the writer sets himself to state the possible reasons which may influence the Himalayan Brothers in doling out so scantily their store of knowledge. It is, in effect, that they foresee that what they have to tell "is calculated to have a very momentous effect on the welfare of mankind." He assumes that what these mysterious persons are possessed of is "the positive truth" (a very considerable postulate it seems to me), and he then says: "The first effect on the minds of all who come to understand it is terribly iconoclastic. It drives out before it *everything* else in the shape of religious belief." There is something curiously, startlingly, grotesque in the notion of these mysterious unknowns sitting aloft on a Himalayan slope, secure in the possession of absolute truth, which of itself and necessarily kills all the various forms of error that the world busies itself with, while Christian and Brahmin, Mahomedan, Jew, and the rest of us play our little farce, and fancy that we have a revelation from God, and a moral code that is not worthless. These men, we are to learn, are the sole depositories of the knowledge of good and evil; they see a world wallowing in error, men dying in religious faiths that are merely foolish when not mischievous; they *can* illuminate the darkness, if they only *will*. And yet they only make the faintest sign with the greatest reluctance! On the assumption of the writer, no graver indictment could be brought against any man by his bitterest foe.

"H. X.," in the *Theosophist*, touches on the question of a Personal and Impersonal God which has so gravely exercised the *Spectator* in reference to Mr. Stock's book. The Reviewer cannot for the life of him understand an impersonal Deity—a Deity "without body, parts, and passions"—and he is much concerned to know what manner of man Mr. Stock can be. He has been called, or has called himself, a Materialist, an Atheist, an Atheistic Spiritualist, a Positivist, and a Pantheist, not to mention other nicely differentiated epithets. One wonders much why a logical conception of the Great First Cause, such as "H. X." elaborates, and such as Mr. Stock would probably agree with, should so vex righteous souls. Is the human body the highest conceivable shrine of spirit? Can we not imagine a God not so baldly and bluntly anthropomorphic? But why, indeed, should we vex ourselves at all with vain imaginings? "H. X." puts it well; "Let us remember above all that in this present life the high theoretical questions of Personal, Impersonal, and No-God are of less concern to us than our own every-day life, about the right conduct of which no similar difficulties exist."

Fas et ab hoste doceri. Mrs. Lynn Linton has published a second edition of her "Witch Stories,"* a collection of more than a hundred narratives which will possess more interest and value for Spiritualists than they do for Mrs. Linton. Indeed it is not apparent why she has taken the trouble to gather these records of superstition, as she views them. For to her they must be melancholy little tales, the moral of which the *Pall Mall Gazette* has told her. They should remind her, her Mentor would say, that she, even she, is separated only by a few generations from these dark days of ignorance and crime, when it was believed that

* "Witch Stories." Chatto and Windus, 1883.

evil spirits not only existed, but that they had power to possess and ruin those who invited them; when diabolic possession was believed to be a fact by other men than Jesus Christ and His disciples: and when ignorance was so rampant that many of these poor mediums, called witches, were foully killed to rid the world of the devil. So these tales should point a moral for their collector—a kind of “*memento mori*,” with a difference. To us they are simply a useful collection of authentic stories, none the worse for our purposes that they are gathered by the hand of an unbeliever.

Facts, of which I have seen only a single number, that for September last, seems to be the embodiment of an excellent idea. It is a collection of “facts” which tend to prove “the intellectual part of man to be immortal.” It is a quarterly publication, and is excellent in style and typography. The facts are recorded on the authority of those who narrate them, and whose names are prefixed to their recitals. Many of the records have been told at “fact-meetings” at Onset Bay, Lake Pleasant, and Queen City Park. Regular meetings, we are told, are now held at Horticultural Hall, Boston, U.S.A., on every Saturday, at 3 p.m. The Society puts forward a programme not unlike that of the Society for Psychical Research, except that it does not appear to undertake personal investigation. It is “especially anxious to hear from everyone who has been present at the dying of persons who have appeared to see their spirit-friends; also from those having had notable visions or dreams which foretold what afterwards proved to be true . . . in fact, to learn of all classes of remarkable phenomena coming from believers of any creed.” The idea, if due care is used in sifting and verifying offered narratives, is excellent, and I entertain no doubt that the editor is on the right track, and cordially wish his venture all success. The address of the *Fact* Publishing Company is P.O. Box 3,539, Boston, Mass., U.S.A.

M. A. (OXON.)

PREMONITION OF DEATH.

A correspondent sends us the following:—“A St. Columb girl helps in a shop at St. Austell, and we went to see her, and she gave us this narrative. One of the sisters keeping the shop was in bad health, and it was arranged to take a cottage at Fowey, on the south coast of Cornwall, where she went for a change, taking with her the St. Columb girl I have mentioned. The father of the invalid came to Fowey to see them, and spent a fortnight, after which he was determined to go home, though there was no particular reason for his doing so, for though I think he was known to have some weakness of the heart, he appeared to be in good health. He returned to St. Austell on the Tuesday, I think, and the girls were left alone in the cottage. On the Thursday evening the bells in the cottage began to ring in an extraordinary way just after the girls had gone to bed, at nine or thereabouts; and they heard heavy steps come up and stop under their window, but on looking out they could see nothing, though it was bright moonlight. Just afterwards they heard a sound as of a heavy fall in their bedroom, and all night the noises continued more or less; but about two they got very bad indeed, and they again heard the heavy steps, exactly like the invalid's father's, come up and stop under their window, but this time they had not courage to look out. This was at half-past two, and afterwards all was quiet. The father at St. Austell was taken ill that evening, and died at half-past two.”

MRS. HARDINGE-BRITTEN'S LECTURE APPOINTMENTS.—LONDON: St. Andrew's Hall, Newman-street, Oxford-street, W., January 7th and 14th.—Address, The Limes, Humphrey-street, Cheetham Hill, Manchester.

MR. JOHN S. FARMER begs to tender his sincere apologies to all who have received from him an insufficiently paid letter during the past few days. The mistake inadvertently arose from a misconception of the postal regulations. Mr. Farmer will be very glad, as a matter of business, to refund the amount paid by any of his correspondents, together with the cost of applying for its return.—4, New Bridge-street, E.C.—*Advt.*

OUR BETTER MOMENTS.

To the Editor of “LIGHT.”

SIR,—On looking over some old papers I came across the accompanying verses, written by my younger brother, Herbert Edward Wallace, in 1850, a few months before his death from yellow fever, at Para, at the early age of twenty-two. They seem to me to be so truly spiritual in feeling as to deserve preserving in your pages. I need hardly say that at that time we had neither of us heard anything of the spiritual movement.

Godalming,

December 29th, 1882.

ALFRED R. WALLACE.

Our Better Moments.

Uncalled they come across the mind,
We know not why or how,
And with instinctive reverence
Ignoble feelings bow;
A power strange, yet holy too,
Breathes through our every sense;
Each atom of our being feels
Its subtle influence.
High visions, noble thinkings, flash
Like meteors through the brain,
If Paradise was lost to us,
'Tis surely come again!

Better moments! Better moments! Ye are sunny angels' wings,
Sent to shed a holier radiance o'er all dim and worldly things.

Perchance we love to watch awhile,
In simple, child-like mood,
The waving of the summer grass,
The ebbing of the flood,
And lie upon a mossy bank,
In some secluded shade;
When sudden, from before our gaze
The grass—the waters—fade;
And giving up the spirit's rein
To unknown guiding hands,
We float in passive confidence
To voiceless spirit lands.

Better moments! Better moments! Ye are sunny angels' wings,
Sent to shed a holier radiance o'er all dim and worldly things.

Or sitting in a leafy wood,
Some still and breathless hour,
The joyous twitter of a bird
Has strange unconscious power:
The power to send through ev'ry nerve
A thrill of soft delight.
A better moment, like the dawn,
Steals in with ambient light.
The soul expands, and lovingly
Takes in its pure embrace,
All life! all nature! high or mean,
Of colour, tongue, or race.

Better moments! Better moments! ye are sunny angels' wings,
Sent to shed a holier radiance o'er all dim and worldly things.

A thousand visions, scenes, and times
Awake the better thought,
By which our duller years of life
Become inspired and taught.
In olden times there rudely came
Handwriting on the wall,
And prostrate souls fell horror-struck
At that wild spirit-call;
But now God's momentary gleam
Is sent into the soul,
To guide uncertain wavering feet
To life's high solemn goal.

Better moments! Better moments! Ye are sunny angels' wings,
Sent to shed a holier radiance o'er all dim and worldly things.

BELIEF IN GHOSTS.—A correspondent informs us that at a somewhat excited meeting of “The Old Boys' Debating Society,” Bradford, on December 14th, the motion “That this House believes in Ghosts,” was carried by a large majority.

MRS. HARDINGE BRITTEN.—As we announced last week, a reception will be given to Mrs. Britten on Monday evening next, at 38, Great Russell-street, at 7 p.m. The Council of the C.A.S. are earnestly desirous that there should be a good attendance. In the course of the evening, Mrs. Britten will, under spirit-control, answer questions on spiritual topics. Admission will be free both to members and friends.

SOME SPIRITUALISTIC REMINISCENCES.

By Martin F. Tupper.

Having often been asked to put on record my few and far-between experiences of Spiritualism, as on several occasions I have verbally related them, I have hitherto neglected or declined to do so, on account of having really seen little, whereas many others have seen far more. And on the whole it is to me rather an unwelcome task from several considerations; first, because I have never wished to add, by my apparent testimony, to the rising tide of unwholesome superstition in that or any other direction; secondly, because I had always a crowd of more important matters to look after, and, perhaps, was inclined to indolence in the "*dolce far niente*" respecting things of less consequence to myself; and thirdly, in chief, because, albeit I have seen and heard a few of the petty miracles (avouched for otherwise by thousands of better witnesses) inexplicable to my own reason, I yet entirely abjure and renounce this so-called Spiritualism as any part of my personal belief. In particular, it seems to me quite an inconclusion to give to the spirits of the dead, or to any other existences, good or evil (unless, indeed, by possibility to ourselves as magnetically and sympathetically influenced by some metaphysical potencies whereof we know next to nothing), the seemingly miraculous powers exhibited, however weakly and childishly, in numberless séances, privileged to possess among the company an ecstatic medium between (as is assumed) themselves and beings immaterial.

The little I have seen and heard shall, however, now, upon a reasonable call, be related simply and honestly, without any theory beyond what is parenthetically alluded to in my last sentence, and with no attempt at explanation, but only the expression of this truth, viz., that no collusion apparently was possible (according to my judgment) in any of the following manifestations, and that I promise only to state plain facts, however others may seek to expound them. Of course, where cunning and dishonesty may contrive conjuring tricks it is not worth while to treat such "manifestations" seriously, but I speak of what seemed to be genuine, if trifling, marvels.

To begin, then, with my earliest experience, written down the same evening, and sent to the *Brighton Gazette*, from which I give an extract. The date is Thursday, January 25th, 1849; the host, the late Mr. Howell, of Hove; the performer, Alexis, pupil of M. Marcillet, who accompanied him. After clairvoyance, induced by passes, Alexis is blindfolded carefully, and then, with the host's own pack of cards, wins blindfolded at games of *écarté* with the writer. Next, a French book, brought by an incredulous physician, was placed open upon the forehead of Alexis, who read aloud some lines of it. This experiment, with variations, was several times repeated. The third was my own test. "The writer had sealed up something unknown to all the world but himself in twelve envelopes of white paper. Alexis, placing the parcel on his forehead, in broken and difficult enunciation, said 'it was writing, two names, both commencing with M; one of them an English name, the other French, or some language not English; that the first contained four letters, the second six [being really nine].' but he failed to guess the names, which were Mary Magdalene. It was suggested that if they had been written in French his mind might have more easily discerned them." After this several locks of hair and sealed up parcels, watches, and lockets were (with some unsuccessful attempts) guessed at, seemingly to the satisfaction of the ladies and gentlemen who had respectively brought them for explanation. "The last experiment regarded a large bon-bon box, in which the host himself had concealed a mystery. Alexis described it as wrapped in several folds, graven all round, oval, a portrait of a young person of eighteen, but done a long time ago, set in gold, 'femme habillée en blanc; elle est morte, la tête au droit.' In all these respects the object was faithfully described, in particular to the 'long time ago,' which, by a date on the portrait, was found to be 1769." And there were some other experiments, but Alexis, as appearing to be well-nigh worn out with mental exertion, was then mercifully unmesmerised. I have added: "In conclusion, the writer is startled but not convinced," &c.; "The clairvoyance of Alexis is sufficiently wonderful to make one ready to admit that the mind of man may by possibility act independently of the bodily organs," &c.

I may mention, by the way, that the said host at whose house Alexis attended was a firm believer in the power of the human will, and as connected therewith, in mesmerism, whereby he used to cure people of headaches and other infirmities; and,

at length, through his philanthropic and energetic attraction to himself of other folks' disorders (for he fancied he imbibed for his own behoof the pains he drained *ab extrâ*), he, unhappily, became a paralytic, dying not long after. One of his less perilous attempts at the miraculous, I remember, was this: he brought a street Arab into his drawing-room, and put a half-crown down on the carpet for him to pick it up if he could, and keep for himself; however, this the boy found, to his wonderment, to be practically impossible, seeing that Mr. Howell had secretly willed that he could not and should not pick up the prize. But such efforts of a man's strong will are well evidenced in numerous other instances, and serve to prove that no spiritual interferences beyond our noble selves are essential to such petty miracles.

Amongst other reminiscences of the marvellous, I may refer to a private exhibition in the Berners-street Hotel, to which I was invited by Mrs. Washington Phillips (of whom more anon), to investigate Mr. Vernon's influence over a little girl some twelve years old. The child's speciality was an alleged capability of reading without eyesight, the back of her head low down on the nape doing duty in the way of vision. To omit numerous other successful examples (some failing, which I thought so far evidences of the absence of collusion), I will detail my own conclusive experiment. But let me anticipate an objection relating to the exhibitor, himself. Some of our party, a very distinguished one, and known to each other, kept Mr. Vernon in conversation at a distance, while the child was reading our thoughts, or the actual words of print unknown to ourselves, quite independently of his manipulations; he having first comatised her into a mesmeric state of trance. The invited guests were told, as in the Alexis case, that we might bring our own tests; and I had put into my pocket a small volume of Milton, from which she might read on the nape of her neck, if she could. We had previously bandaged her eyes, even to plastering them up; and were only bidden to be careful not to let the handkerchief cover the place of reverted seeing on her neck. I stood behind the child, and, without knowing where I opened my little Milton, placed the expanded volume on the back of her head; and forthwith, slowly and with difficulty, as a child might, she read two lines of blank verse, which I and all immediately verified! Now, I state a fact which I cannot explain; for I myself had not seen the lines, so my own brain was not read: neither could Mr. Vernon nor anyone else have been concerned in the matter. I believe this sort of thing to be well-known to Spiritualists, and they may, for aught I know, refer it to angelic or necromantic interposition: whereas, what physicians tell us of hypochondria is, perhaps, a mysterious explanation nearer the mark.

The same child, refreshed into an abnormal ecstasy, taking the hands of several of our party professed to read their thoughts, with admitted success in some instances. With me she failed, but then I was not considered *en rapport*. Female believers are always much more susceptible than masculine sceptics. However, I certainly had proof of the child's marvellous power in this slight matter following. Two young ladies had successfully brought her in spirit into their mother's drawing-room in Berkeley-square, the child graphically explaining all she saw as she was mentally led along, and on being asked if she noticed anything new and pretty on the mantel-piece, she got up and placed herself in an attitude of dancing, and she said there was a figure and it was clothed in lace. This was true; it was a bisque statuette of Taglioni. On being led round the room, still in spirit and clairvoyante, the child strangely described wax-flowers under a glass, and laughed heartily at "Taffy riding his goat,"—a china ornament which she could have known nothing of.

With respect to the lady who invited us, I can relate a strange story wherewith the Brighton doctors in 1848 were familiar. Mrs. P. had an invalid daughter subject to violent headaches, and as she had read of the remedial powers of mesmerism from Chauncey Townsend's book, privately resolved to try and cure her, and soon set her to sleep by the usual "passes." However, when after twelve and even eighteen hours the girl could not be awakened, Mrs. P. and her husband (a clergyman, who knew nothing of the cause) were alarmed and summoned doctor after doctor, to wake her, if they could. But all was in vain, until some one turning to the peccant and magical volume found that by the simple process of reversing the passes the abnormal slumber might be made to cease. This was done at once, and all came more than right, for the girl woke up without her usual headache, and was cured from that hour. At this time of day, after thirty years and more, society having become wiser, and our medical men more physiologically

hygienic, we all now wot of mesmerism, and innumerable cases of cure through that mysterious form of catalepsy.

For another small experience, I have several times been among a crowd of others at public exhibitions of those who speak off hand in prose or verse, "inspirationally" as they call it, but as the outer world prefer to believe, improvisatorially, and certainly amid such gifted persons Mrs. Cora Tappan stands out prominently in my memory. At the Brighton Pavilion I gave her for a theme to be versified on the spot extempore my own heraldic motto, "*L'espoir est ma force*," and to my astonishment, in a burst of rhymed eloquence she rolled off at least a dozen stanzas on Hope and its spiritual power. Some one else among the audience gave the subject of cremation, and forthwith the lady descanted with terrific force on funeral pyres and the horrors of Gehenna; whilst a male performer affected to personate sundry well known dead orators of past days (for as the inspirers were supposed to be disembodied spirits no living orators were allowable), and he certainly imitated both voices and topics with singular success. But everybody has heard of this sort of thing, sufficiently remarkable as a mental effort; and we have all similarly witnessed the more material marvels of Maskelyne and Cook, known to be mechanical contrivances which are still riddles to the world.

Again, there are those who draw and paint in a condition of spiritual ecstasy; and I remember visiting a public exhibition in Bond-street, exclusively of most curious and intricate pictures, asserted to have been inspired by dead artists, some being elaborate flourishings of scenes and figures, said to be thus depicted as with lightning speed. As to living artists, there are in existence several excitable youths and damsels who write and draw very rapidly in an ecstatic state, and I myself possess a dreamy conglomerate of microscopical faces crowded together, and stated to have been drawn thus instantaneously to prove to us "the cloud of witnesses," "the innumerable company of angels," by whom we are continually surrounded.

I premit with brief mention sundry inexplicable wonders, such as those wherewith the spiritualistic papers are frequently full, only stating that I was one of those who investigated the case of the Rev. Mr. Vaughan's pew-opener, at St. James's, Brighton, whose daughter was thought to be "bewitched." Certainly strange knockings accompanied her when she came in at my call, much like those I had heard many years ago at Rochester, U.S.; and her mother (a pious and credible widow) assured me, with tears of unfeigned anxiety, that the chairs and stools followed her about!—a statement only half credible, when we reflect that there is an animal magnetism as well as a mineral one, and that we know nothing of the reasons of either. Our ignorance on such matters is so profound that we may fairly be credulous unless we obstinately refuse altogether our belief in and to human testimony; but if we dare to do this, higher interests are endangered than spiritualistics. Our religion is mainly based upon credible evidence.

There is certainly much that is mysterious in the toy they call "Planchette," a triangular thin slab of polished wood on a couple of small wheels, with a pencil at the apex. Hands laid upon this by two persons properly conditioned, will give apparent vitality and volition to the small machine, and make the pencil seem to write of itself in answer to expressed (or meditated) questions. At a wealthy mansion in South Kensington, for instance, I saw two charming young Italian ladies, sisters, covering, with infinite rapidity, sheet after sheet with the abstrusest essays on occult subjects, given to them to write upon inspirationally, and the chief wonder was (as a learned friend by me well observed) where the knowledge came from, so seemingly infused into two unscientific young girls. Afterwards, when the said learned friend tried Planchette with me, we were considerably startled to find that when I asked of the so-called spirits, "What think ye of Christ?" the pencil under our unconsciously-guided hands made answer, "With the utmost reverence!" I need not assure mankind that neither my friend nor I (both incredulous and unwilling witnesses) lent ourselves or one another to any deception, and were mentally inclined, if at all, to the expectation that the "spirits" might rather blaspheme than bless. It is right to mention that, beyond the pair of young ladies and our two selves, only the host and hostess were in the room, of whom I have this further wonder to report, viz., that the host, whom I must not specify by name without his leave, is afflicted with blindness, notwithstanding which and his alleged incompetence towards poetry as an old naval officer, his wife shewed me several copybooks full of blank verse written by him in a hand unlike his own, and supposed by them to be

inspired by Young, as a continuation of his "Night Thoughts." The versification certainly seemed worthy of that prosy poet's *Musa Pedestris*. The captain and his lady also told us how frequently flowers and sweetmeats (!) were showered on them from the ceiling at their domestic dual séances; and on another occasion a lady shewed my wife and me a paper of seed pearls, alleged to have been flung into her lap from the heavens—through the ceiling—by her departed lord and master! Similarly, a lady well known in the professedly spiritualistic circles, deposited round her chair, in the dark, at Mr. S. C. Hall's, a profusion of bouquets—probably from Covent Garden—and that, notwithstanding the hostess had herself searched the lady before the séance, as it was known that Mrs. G.'s special gift from the spirits was the multitudinous creation of flowers! Really, there must be a stand somewhere made to credulity; but, at all events, the venerable host and hostess believed this, on what seemed to them reasonable evidence, and quite forgave me for not believing it too.

And this brings me, naturally enough, to give a detailed account of the two best and last séances I ever took the trouble to attend; for I have, during many years, entirely avoided such exhibitions, as generally childish, mentally unwholesome, and to some people dangerously seductive. I had several times asked my worthy friends last alluded to, to give me and a friend of mine, a lieutenant in the Royal Navy, the privilege of "assisting" at a séance under their unexceptionable guidance: and accordingly we were invited to meet Mr. Home, the high priest of Spiritualism, a quiet, well-mannered, gentlemanly person enough, known to our host from his birth. The other guests were a Countess, the widow of a colonel, and a distinguished physician; in all we numbered eight. My friend and I were requested privately, by our host, to conceal our probable incredulity if we desired the favour of the "spirits" in the way of manifestations; and as these were what we came for, besides our own polite desire to do at Rome as the Romans do, we readily assented to the reasonable request. After the usual greetings and small talk of the day, and tea and coffee, and so forth, we all took seats round the drawing-room circular table (a very weighty one, as I proved afterwards, on a gigantic central pillar, and covered with a heavy piece of velvet tapestry); and before commencing the special business we came for, I was pleased to hear our host propose that we should all kneel round the table and offer up prayer: this he did, simply and beautifully, in some words extemporary, closing with a Church collect and the Lord's Prayer. On my expressed approval of this course, when we rose, Mr. H. said it was always his custom, as a precautionary measure against the self-intrusion of evil spirits; admittedly a wisdom, even if it seemed somewhat unwise and perilous to be more or less courting the company of such unpleasant guests, if a séance (as experienced afterwards) did not happen to be made safe by exorcism. And now the gaslights bracketed round the room were put as low as possible, making a dim, religious semi-darkness; however, as there was a bright fire in the grate, and some small scintillæ of gas, and one's eyesight soon gets accustomed to any diminution of light, we could soon see nearly as well as usual. This "gloaming" is a common condition in séances, and for ought anyone knows may be an electrical *sine quâ non* as needed for animal magnetism; albeit some paid professionals may possibly find darkness a very useful veil for cheaterly. While we were chatting round the table,—and Mr. Home enjoined this as better than the silent sobriety I looked for—suddenly the table shuddered and a cold wind swept over our hands laid upon it. "They are coming now," said Mr. H., which everybody seemed glad of, though that cold wind felt to me not a little "uncanny," but I said nothing in disparagement, for fear of stopping a "manifestation." Soon, loud knocks were heard, apparently from the middle of the table, and on sundry spirits being alleged to be present, Mr. Home proceeded to question them through the ordinary clumsy fashion of the alphabet, and some unimportant answers were elicited, which I fail to remember and in common honesty must not invent. We were soon to see stranger things; and I suppose the séance was exceptionally successful as I afterwards noticed some of it in print. For while we were looking and expecting, suddenly the table began to tilt this way and that, and then as if by an effort the ponderous mass, with all our hands still upon the velvet pall, positively mounted slowly into the air, insomuch that we were obliged to rise from our chairs and stand to reach the surface. I could see it at least two feet from the carpet, and Mr. Home invited me to take especial notice that none of the company could possibly be lifting the

table; indeed, the strength of all of us combined would have been barely enough for such a heavy task. Of course, every one else but myself and friend supposed that the "spirits" had kindly done this miracle to please us; but I unfortunately said "Oh! Mrs. Hall! it will crush your chandelier!" (one of Venice glass, very precious)—at which unbelieving remark, probably, the spirits took umbrage, for at once the table ceased ascending, and with a slow oscillation descended very gently on to the carpet. This sort of petty miracle is a frequent experience among the Spiritualists, and how it is effected I cannot imagine. There could be no contrivance or machinery in our host's drawing-room, as must be the case imitatively at the Egyptian Hall; none of the company could be conspiring to deceive, and more than all, that huge, heavy table rising up against the law of gravitation was enough to chase away all incredulity. One fact is stronger than fifty theories; and one reliable success overweighs a thousand failures. I testify to that which I have seen.

But more and more wondrous was to follow. All at once Mr. Home flung himself back in his chair, looking wild and white; and then rising slowly and solemnly, went to the still bright fire, into which he thrust his unprotected hands, and taking out a double handful of live coals, placed them—as a fire offering—upon Mr. Hall's snow-white head, combing the hair over them with his fingers, all which our host appeared to receive more than patiently—religiously. Thereafter Mr. Home placed them in the Countess's blonde-lace cap, and carried them, as a favour vouchsafed by the spirits, to each of us, to hold in our hands. When he came to me Mr. Hall said: "My friend, have faith." "Yes," I answered, "and courage, too"; whereupon I was blest with a good handful of those wonderful coals, still hot enough to burn any skin; but, somehow or other, I felt no pain and had no mark. Here was another law of nature put to shame, in the miraculous fact that fire was seemingly deprived of the power of burning. How this could be, I cannot guess; but I record manfully the fact as witnessed. After this, an accordion held under the table by Mr. Home with one hand, the other being upon the table, positively played a tune of itself—"Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon"—requested by Dr. C., "that being the tune his dead child loved so." I was requested to look under the table to see the "spirit-hand" operating near the carpet; but I saw nothing except the vitalised accordion expanding and contracting of itself, being held tightly at the upper handle by Mr. Home. Some of the company, however, claimed to see and to shake hands with the child, and Mr. Home requested me to ask for a similar favour by placing my hand open under the table; this, accordingly, I ventured to do, with the result of feeling my thumb sensibly touched and thrilled, which I was told was a good sign of favour from the spirits—albeit in my own mind I remembered what our omniscient Shakespeare sings at the mouth of one of the Macbeth witches,

"By the pricking of my thumbs
Something wicked this way comes"—

and failed to feel quite comfortable. Soon, however, Mr. Home said: "The accordion is leaving my hand"; and I saw the mysterious thing crawling on the floor like a lame dog till it got into a corner. Of course, I suspected a secret string; but all at once it moved out and came back, moaning *Æolianly* as it went, and stood up beside the chair of Mrs. Colonel N.S., who patted it lovingly; thence passing behind me it went and stood beside the Countess, who also caressed it; and then Mr. Home said: "Now ask the spirit to come to you"; whereunto I acceded, and the accordion crept near me, as if unwillingly, and stood up; but when I touched it the thing shrank from my unsympathetic hand, and fell down flop.

After this, I noticed that my naval friend was staring with all his eyes at something over our military widow's head, and that his hair (it is red, which colour is very spiritualistic) stood on end as with fear. "What's the matter, P.?" I asked. "Don't you see it?" responded he. "What?" "The gray figure behind Mrs. N. S., bearded like the Egyptian Sphinx." "That's the Colonel!" exclaimed Mr. Hall, and the widow bowed religiously, with a "Dear! is it you?" On this, as my friend was terribly frightened, we soon took leave; and when we went home, I found that he was so pursued by "spirits" rapping all about him, that he actually vacated his own room and slept in mine, for protection against the invisible, on two chairs till morning broke; when he feared the spirits no longer. I may mention that this insight into an immaterial world (he having been inclined before to Pyrrhoism) quite altered his career, and that soon

after he took holy orders. In this connection I may state that according to a printed account I have seen, both Mr. and Mrs. Hall were converted from avowed Materialism by spirit manifestation, and that when the question of "*Cui bono?*" is raised, his experience and that of divers others (the aforesaid Dr. C. in particular) will avouch for the practical usefulness of these petty miracles.

But I must have done, with only one other reminiscence soon after that at Ashley-place. This time the venue is Fitzroy-square, and the company (to omit needless detail) was a polyglot one, consisting chiefly of a German merchant, a Hebrew financier, a French governess, my naval friend aforesaid, who was quick at Latin, and I, who more or less remembered my Greek. Of course English was represented in the two only other guests; and it will be seen how strangely the science of philosophy enters into this my next and concluding anecdote. After plenty of other rappings and noises (I noticed by the way that all the metal things in the room, as castors and cruets—it was a dining-room—and wine coolers and bronze chandelier, were clicked and clanged), and after the usual stupid alphabet questions and answers had been exhibited; after also the heavy mahogany table on five substantial pillars had been miraculously moved about the room and tilted, as we failed to effect at the finale when we tried; all at once, a thundering knock quite shook the table and startled us; on which, Dr. C., our (unprofessional) medium for the nonce, as he had seen more of spiritualistics than we had, called for the alphabetical test to ascertain who it could be that knocked so furiously, for the blows were often repeated. So then, by the slow method of letter by letter, he made out the name "Jamblicus," and then gave it up in despair, as he said it was a mischievous imp that was sporting with us; but the knocks still continued, and some one suggested that perhaps this strange name was foreign, and that his own language would please the incensed spirit better than English. Accordingly, he was addressed by the assembled circle severally in French, German, Hebrew, and Latin, all in vain; when I bethought me of Greek and the Pythagoreans and spoke out "*Ei su Jamblicos*," (*Art thou Jamblicus?*)—on which, as if with joy at having been discovered, there was a rush of noises and knocks all round the room (my perfervid imagination might have fancied the flapping of wings), and immediately after there ensued a dead silence! So we soon broke up and went home. Opening my classical dictionary at Jamblicus, I read what I certainly had not seen or thought of for more than thirty years, that he was an author on "the mysteries of the Egyptians," and was bracketted with Porphyry as a professor of the black art. Was then this unpleasant visitor to Fitzroy-square no other than that magician redivivus? An awkward possibility.

And now to bring these scattered reminiscences to a practical conclusion. What can I, what can my readers decide, on a rational consideration of the whole matter? It is, no doubt, very baffling to judge what rightly to think about it. I have stated a few facts that have come under my own personal knowledge; but there are thousands of others similar and even more extraordinary, which numerous persons quite as credible as I am can vouch for in like manner to be true facts while remaining petty miracles. For myself, I must suspend judgment; waiting to see what in these wonderful times some further development of electricity, for example, may haply produce for us. After recent marvels of the telephone, microphone, photophone, and I know not what others, why should some Edison or Lane Fox not stumble upon a form of psychic force emanating from our personal nervous organisation, and capable of operating physically on all things round us, the immaterial conquering the material it pervades? Some such vague theory as to spiritualistic manifestations may be a far more rational as well as pleasing explanation of modern miracles, than to suppose that our dead friends come at any medium's summons to move tables, talk bad grammar, and play accordions, or that angels, good and evil, are allowed to be employed in mystifying or terrifying the frivolous assistants at a séance.

[We have given Mr. Tupper's communication at length because of the value of the testimony which it affords to the genuineness of the phenomena recorded; and because we think that a perusal of his interesting narrative will generally lead to a conclusion very different from that at which Mr. Tupper himself seems to have arrived.—ED. "LIGHT."]

If none were to reprove the vicious, excepting those who sincerely hate vice, there would be much less censoriousness in the world.

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Reports of the proceedings of Spiritualist Societies in as succinct a form as possible, and authenticated by the signature of a responsible officer, are solicited for insertion in "LIGHT." Members of private circles will also oblige by contributing brief records of noteworthy occurrences at their séances.

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1883.

What is the position of Spiritualism now as compared with twelve months ago; and what are its prospects in the near future? These are questions which naturally occur to us in commencing the work of another year; and upon the answer which we can honestly give to them depend very much the spirit and confidence with which we can enter upon the New Year's labours.

Have we reason to be satisfied with the present condition of Spiritualism in this country? Upon the whole we think Yes! It is quite true, of course, that we have had some very disagreeable *contretemps*; that from one cause or other the reputation of Spiritualism has, rightly or wrongly, been brought into discredit; and that from time to time we have been well-nigh disheartened by the malicious assaults of foes, or by the equally damaging follies of friends. But the Cause itself, being founded on right and truth, has suffered no permanent harm; nay, more, has come unscathed—yea, even purified—out of the fiery ordeal through which it has passed. Its friends have learned lessons of prudence and wisdom; and we venture to think that at no time in its history has there ever been amongst them a more genuine jealousy of its fair fame than now—a more sincere and earnest determination to preserve it in every way from the very appearance of evil.

The establishment of the Society for Psychical Research, during the past year, should also be regarded as a cause for profound satisfaction. Spiritualists may take credit to themselves for having kept firm hold of their faith in the demonstrability of spirit communion, till others, distrusting their conclusions, have felt compelled to institute independent inquiries for themselves; and though the new Society proceeds on the principle of taking nothing for granted and sets itself afresh to the solution of questions which Spiritualists have determined years ago; yet there is to our mind no room for doubt that its work will, in the end, bring large accessions to our own ranks. Its investigations will, we believe, inevitably lead to the conclusion that there are constantly recurring phenomena for which no other theory than that maintained by Spiritualists will reasonably account. We are thankful, then, for our new allies, even though they work under another designation. They may sow, but we shall inevitably have a share in the harvest.

But in the meantime we, as Spiritualists pure and simple, must not relax our efforts. We must not be content to stand aside and leave all the labour to those who have not reached the faith to which we have arrived, or who, at any rate, have not the boldness to proclaim publicly the full

measure of their convictions. Those who give their complete assent—head, heart, and soul—to Spiritualism, as distinguished from those who only profess to be inquiring, should band together in a strong united effort to make their power felt throughout the land. If Spiritualists would do this they would have the respectful attention of a Press which cannot afford even the appearance of approval of an unpopular thing. We do not urge any movement in the direction of popular propagandism. We would not force our views upon the attention of men who have no taste for spiritual matters; but we think that Spiritualists, nevertheless, are negligent of their duties if they do not take every reasonable means of giving to all an opportunity of learning the truth if they are so disposed. We have, in the C.A.S., an institution which should be the centre of spiritualistic life in this country, and an institution which, if properly supported, would achieve a vast amount of very useful work. We are breaking no confidence, we think, if we say that there are members of the Council who are anxious and waiting to promote some important projects as soon as its financial position will permit, and we cannot but feel that whatever good may be effected by another organisation, the Spiritualists should allow nothing to tempt them to withhold their hearty support from an institution which is peculiarly their own. The Society for Psychical Research deserves, and ought to have, the help of Spiritualists; but in affording this, Spiritualists will commit a grievous error if they allow the C.A.S. to suffer.

PROPHETIC DREAMS.

Could inventive philosophy devise any apparatus capable of photographing dreams, what a remarkable string of tableaux, clicked off in the night-watches, should we sometimes find awaiting us in the morning!

Most of these would probably have found their birth upon the very frontiers of sleep, while the reasoning faculty yet retains sufficient dominion to impart a measure of consistency to the army of fantastic thoughts preparing to hold high carnival in the brain.

Experience has proved that the memory may be educated to retain the dreams of the night; and the records of private life are full of instances in which, where this process has been followed, most singular results have rewarded the pains.

It has even been declared—and fortified by the most authentic testimony—that some forecast of the inevitable future will occasionally overshadow the slumbering fancy; and that a carefully kept dream-book—like that of Tippoo Saib, retained in the museum of the India House, and said to contain some very remarkable foreshadowings of the author's misfortunes—might contain many an augury destined to fulfilment.

The wife of Mr. N. (a gentleman now living, who himself related the following circumstances, to a literary friend of my own) had at intervals throughout her life displayed indications of a second-sighted intelligence, conveyed through the medium of dreams.

Although, as a rule, these previsions referred to matters of slight importance, they occasionally extended to greater things, and the confirmation which almost invariably followed at length induced Mr. N., as well as other members of the family, to regard these prophetic impressions with a respect scarcely inferior to that entertained for them by the dreamer herself.

One night the latter awoke her husband with the intelligence that she had had a dream of terrible augury, as regarded their eldest son, then a midshipman on board a line-of-battle ship at a distant station.

Partially reassured, she calmed herself again to sleep, but on the succeeding night awoke still more agitated than

on the first occasion, and declared that "George" had seemed to stand at her bedside, pale, disordered, dripping, as one just drowned. Again a stronger mind strove to impart the hope and comfort it scarcely dared to feel; but the recurrence, on the third night, of the ominous dream, convinced the poor mother that she had been indeed deprived of her child.

Next morning Mr. N., standing at his garden gate, was accosted by a neighbour, who, with some apparent anxiety, inquired if he had heard any especial news.

Mr. N. replying in the negative, his friend announced the report that a terrific hurricane had burst upon the coasts of B. All the vessels lying in the roads had got safely to sea, and weathered the storm, with the exception of three English ships, one a vessel of war, which had been forced on shore and totally lost.

Mr. N. inquired their names, and, on hearing them, exclaimed:—

"God be thanked! George is indeed on that station, as you know, but he is in the L."

"And it is expressly mentioned," rejoined his friend, "that she was the first to get to sea."

Much relieved, Mr. N. hurried in to relate to his wife the comforting intelligence. But not for an instant could she be induced to question the fatal significance of the vision. The image of her drowned boy was ever present to her eyes; and the presage was to be too sadly fulfilled.

When details reached England, it was known that the captain of the L., George's ship, had gone to dine on board another vessel, taking the boy with him. The suddenness and severity of the storm baffled every effort to regain the L. They had to remain, perforce, and were subsequently lost, with those they came to visit.

This was a modern example of the dream-vision, the second of those five classes into which Macrobius divides dreams; and the not unnatural offspring of that condition which Sir Thomas Browne, in his "Religio Medici," attributes to the soul in sleep; "when, during the slumber of the senses, reason is awake the most—not that faculty of comparison and conclusion which we call reason, but that instinct of the soul whereby it concludes without comparing, and knows without syllogising, by an instantaneous operation of its own innate faculties."

An invariable characteristic of this rare phenomenon is the clear, indelible impression it at once stamps upon the mind—the only one that survives, totally unchanged, the transition from sleep to waking. In this lies one of its distinctions from the common dream—that the resumed intelligence does not reject it as a figment of the pure reason, but accepts it as a fact already argued out. "I *know* it has happened," is the dreamer's expression. The belief never wavers. The actual ground defies analysis, and may almost be compared with that intuition which, before the fall of man, occupied the place of acquired knowledge.

It is impossible not to notice the singular manner in which these reiterated dreams sometimes find accomplishment in fact.

I have met with an instance of a man who, between his youth and middle age, dreamed, at least a score of times, of riding into a village situated in a wild and savage landscape, such as was dear to Salvator Rosa, and of meeting, at a turn of the little street, a bridal procession, the bride at its head, wearing a garland of red and white roses, a purple jacket trimmed with fur, and a crimson petticoat. *She had but one eye!*

Years passed, and the dreamer found himself travelling in Bohemia. Suddenly, he drew bridle in a spot that seemed familiar to him as the home he had left. Another instant, and the village to which he had made so many dreaming visits revealed itself, feature for feature, to his astonished gaze! Not a living creature was to be seen, but he *knew*—as he said—the reason, and told his companions

that all the rustic community were assembled at a wedding, the procession of which they would meet at the next turn. He even foretold the bride's attire. A few hundred yards more, and there she was, indeed, precisely as dream-foretold—even to the absence of an eye!

The recurring dream becomes stamped, at length, with a sort of prophetic value. "Such and such a thing *must* happen to me before I die, or why have I dreamed it so persistently?" said one who subsequently experienced the fulfilment of a dream to all appearance as remote as chance could make it, from the path of his life.

Sir Victor Houlton, for many years, and still, Government Secretary at Malta, told me that he had dreamed, in boyhood, with singularly vivid and minute detail, that he was residing in that island while subjected to so rigorous a blockade that rats and mice attained the rank of delicacies, and an entire dog was a thing on which to ground a banquet of unusual magnificence.

Having no interest in, or connection with, Malta, more than any other point of British dominion, and being, moreover, intended for the Church, there seemed little prospect of Sir Victor's dream becoming realised. Circumstances, however, ultimately induced him to embrace a diplomatic career, and he now holds, as I have said, the chief appointment in the above dependency, where, over and above the zealous discharge of his general public duties, he is observed to evince a peculiar, not to say personal interest, in the condition of the provision stores of that important garrison. It is a fact that, since Sir Victor's accession to office, Valetta is victualled for two years.

The waking dream—impulse, or strong impression—though differing from it in some respects, may be regarded as germane to the present matter. In such cases, the understanding remains unfettered, while in the condition of sleep this is suspended, and what has been termed "pure reason" supplies its place.

In 1863, the commercial and seafaring community of Newport, Monmouthshire, witnessed with indignant surprise the return of one of their stout little ships, which after having, against great difficulties, doubled Cape Horn, put suddenly about, and returned to port, cargo and all, precisely as she had started, three months before. The skipper, Captain Matthias, alleged that he had acted in obedience to an impulse he had found irresistible—an impulse in no sort communicated through his outward senses, but speaking, as it were, within him, with all the distinctness and authority of an actual voice, commanding him to put back, on pain of the complete destruction of both ship and crew. He "remonstrated" most earnestly (he always, in his narration, used phrases implying the dealing with another individuality), but the "voice" persisted, and promised, in the event of obedience, fair breezes, from the moment of altering the vessel's course—and this undoubtedly came to pass.

Of course an act so unusual and unaccountable could not be passed over, and the captain, submitting to a court of inquiry, was deprived of his certificate.

His ship, the *Esk*, sailed once more, under new command, and was lost. Our business, however, is with her old commander.

There was a calmness and consistency about Matthias that, even in the storm of reprobation he had raised, seem to have commanded respect. It is, as a rule, not difficult to discern when a man believes he is telling you the truth. This captain was a teetotaller. He had never exhibited the least token of mental aberration. His crew, to a man, though dissatisfied with his proceedings, declared him the coolest and most skilful seaman among them. A man of strong religious feelings, his life had been in accordance with his professions. All his worldly interests were associated with the successful prosecution of his voyage. And,

lastly, he was under a deep obligation to the principal owner, who had assisted him liberally in a time of need.

His address before the board of inquiry was a model of manly, straightforward eloquence, and he acquiesced in the withdrawal of his certificate as a duty to be expected from those to whom he could offer no proof, apart from his bare word, of the extraordinary experience he had described.

In reality, a case like that of Captain Matthias does not present itself twice in a century, and it is worth while to consider what would be the probable conduct of nineteen persons in twenty, subjected to such a test. We know that impulses of this nature have been the parent of deeds of heroic daring. Why not, then, of prudence? of humanity? A person placed in the position of Captain Matthias labours under this difficulty—that it is not within the power of ordinary language to describe the irresistible mind-pressure exercised by this mysterious prompter. Before it, duty, interest, inclination, alike give way. Danger, the love of life, are words without significance—lost in the echo of the inner voice that persistently demands obedience. If it possess not the character, it has in some degree the force, of actual inspiration. Unable to trace it to an intelligible source, he who experiences it refers the mysterious secret to the Source of all intelligence—the soul to the soul's Creator. Nor is it creditable to—though perfectly consistent with—human judgment, to recognise, in these rare examples, no element of justification.

The case of Captain Matthias and the Esk (the incident obtained too much publicity to make it necessary to disguise names) is not the only one that, within these last years, supplies an authenticated instance of the mental phenomenon above described. I may, perhaps, be allowed to revert to the subject in a later paper.

HENRY SPICER.

REMARKABLE MATERIALISATIONS.

From Notes taken by A. Hildreth, LL.B.

I.

On June 10th, 1878, at about ten o'clock p.m., I was sitting with a friend of mine (a medium) and another gentleman, in the drawing-room of Aldwyn Tower, Malvern, the then residence of Dr. and Mrs. Nichols.

Raps came in different parts of the room, and the message was spelled out, "Watch and wait." The medium became entranced and walked the room with energy. We saw in the twilight a white misty appearance accompanying him on the side away from us. "There is a materialisation," said the control, who gave the name of "Dr. Richards"; "we shall try to take the medium into the garden and cause the materialised spirit to go beside him. Follow at a respectful distance, and place your chairs in the middle of the lawn."

The voice that spoke to us had the tone and some of the peculiarities of articulation belonging to the medium's natural voice, but there was a distinct quality unfamiliar to us, partly consisting of deliberation, precision, and authority.

The spirit doctor now gave the signal for the descent into the garden. "Protect your lungs well," said he; "it is chilly." The medium crossed the room, unfastened one valve of the window, and stepped out upon the verandah. We each took a chair and followed, but were delayed at the window by having to open the other valve to admit the chairs, so that when we reached the verandah, the medium had already descended the stone steps and was in the garden. No form appeared beside him.

We placed our chairs on the lawn as directed, while the medium took his seat upon the garden bench; but in a few seconds he came towards us, and, speaking in the now familiar voice of "Dr. Richards," directed us to change our position to a point where our line of vision towards the bench was interrupted by some bushes, which thus would

serve instead of a curtain. The medium retraced his steps, and the clear small voice of a spirit known as "Joey" came from the direction of the bench, saying, according to his custom, "Holloa, Arthur!" Then all was silent.

We presently heard the medium breathing heavily, and a mass of white drapery, such as is commonly seen at séances, emerged from behind one of the bushes to our right. It came further into view, and we distinguished two forms standing side by side, draped to the feet and with conical caps on their heads. They remained half a minute and then disappeared.

White drapery again protruded, and remained quiet, projecting a little beyond the bush. The medium crossed over without speaking, and stood before us. Placing his fists together in front of him, he separated them laterally with a spasmodic jerk, and, after other movements, turned and walked away, *absorbing* the white drapery as he passed round the bush. This seemed to be an attempt, only partially successful, to shew the form and the medium at the same time.

After a short interval, another form appeared on the left. This figure turned its profile, and shewed that it was not surrounded by a skirt, but merely held a white gauze apron before it, two dark legs being visible.

The form having retired, the medium again came towards us. "I do not think it wise," said the voice of "Dr. Richards," "to continue the materialisations longer; we must have darker nights. Follow the medium." We did so, and returned to the drawing-room.

We thanked the spirit for our unexpected pleasure. "The thanks are not due," he answered; "on the other hand, we have to thank you for giving your attention; it was an experiment for our own satisfaction; we have been preparing this séance for two days past." He informed us that manifestations required thought, experiment, and perseverance on the part of spirits, and that not merely a few, but myriads, were associated to produce them. They liked to have their labours appreciated. Drapery served to protect the materialised form from the effects of light and of the human eye. He said he could explain the source from which the drapery was obtained, but did not think it wise. He afterwards concluded that he could do so "without danger," and told us that the drapery was made from the medium's underclothes.

Hoping he should have the "honour" of conversing with us again, the control, after a long talk, wished us "good night."

II.

On another evening, when the medium was seated at the piano in the twilight, the instrument "walked" out from the wall, and hats and other light objects leaped about the room. These effects were attributed to "Joey."

Afterwards the medium became controlled by "Dr. Richards." He said he liked these little conversations, and would answer our questions as well as he could, trammelled as he was by a "human case." He gave an impressive account of his passage into the other world; how, brought up in old orthodox views, he lay on his bed of sickness a prey to horrible anxiety; how, at the moment of his death he seemed to be passing up through an interminable mist, still suffering mental agony, till the clouds parted, and he saw a group of spirits of exceeding beauty waiting to receive him. He found, however, that these spirits who seemed to him so fine, were only of the lower order. He passed from sphere to sphere until he reached the fifth, where he now is. The various spheres might be compared to the ages of a man's life, except that a higher grade was reached by voluntary effort, not by mere growth.

He said that the motives of spirits in communicating with mortals were mainly of a benevolent nature. They desired to elevate the minds of mankind by assuring them of their future destiny and instilling into their minds some

of the quiet harmony of their own existence; nevertheless, this intercourse largely benefits the spirits themselves and tends to raise them to a higher sphere. As to human nature, it was substantially the same in the next world as in this, but the sentiment of malevolence, instigating us to inflict pain on others, and which plays so large a part in this world, even with the most benevolent, grows weak in the other world, and finally disappears for want of use, because the causes exciting it do not exist to the same extent there as here. It was impossible for the highest spirits to communicate personally with those still in the body.

The control spoke on many other subjects, sometimes shewing great energy and warmth, at others becoming very ironical, especially when he spoke of our "poverty-stricken world," as he called it, and of our religious squabbles, "when the whole matter lies in a nut shell."

III.

On June 16th a twilight séance was held in the house. A female figure came from the cabinet. She passed close to the sitters, the drapery making a low incessant rustling. She passed behind one gentleman, placed her hands on his shoulders, and bending down, touched the side of her head affectionately against his. The face was not distinct. "That was your mother," cried "Joey," from behind the curtain. "Was it?" said the gentleman. "Do you think anyone else would caress you like that?" replied "Joey."

"Joey," now preparing to materialise, talked constantly behind the curtain. Somebody crept up to listen outside the séance room. "Joey" gave the door a heavy thump, and told us with glee of other instances when he had thus scared away eavesdroppers. He knew of their approach, not by sight, but by feeling their magnetism, which was different in every person.

"Joey" now appeared materialised, seated himself in a chair, and conversed upon spiritual physics. Spirits, he believed, would hereafter attain the power of materialising in full daylight, but they were prevented at present by the mental condition of mankind. If the eyes of the sitters were blindfolded they could even now come in daylight. No arrangement of mirrors for reflecting the spirit, instead of viewing it directly, would answer. If ink or other colouring matter were squirted into the face of a strongly materialised spirit, the marks would afterwards be seen on the medium's face, and would be no test whatever of dishonesty. If a sitter rushed at a materialised spirit and struck it, the magnetism of the former would instantly dissolve the form, which would return to the medium, carrying the blow with it. The medium would suffer as much as though struck directly. "But," said "Joey," and here his tone was unusually fierce, "if anyone should attempt such a thing, I should not scruple, while the power remained, to snatch up the music-box and maim him before he could injure the medium;" and "Joey" gave the great music-box a swing.

"Could a spirit materialise through a cage?" I asked.

"I've got a good idea," said "Joey," "a very good idea—an excellent idea. Put the medium in a hen-coop; one of those long ones."

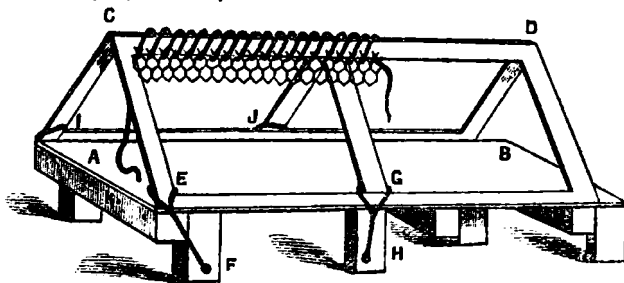
In conclusion he invited me behind the curtain. I felt the medium's head, and took both his hands in mine. They were quivering like leaves. The spirit meanwhile stood beside me, seen by all the sitters.

IV.

On June 19th a séance was held in the garden. Having no hen-coop with which to follow out the suggestion of "Joey," we constructed a cage out of materials at hand.

Two wooden frames hinged together were set upon the garden bench in the shape of a gable roof. Stout wire net-

work was stretched over the two frames and spiked to it. [A portion only of this wire network is shewn in the accompanying sketch.]



A strong cord, without knot or splice, was wound round and round the frame-work, at each revolution passing through a mesh of the net. Thus every mesh which touched the frame was bound tightly down to it. The two ends of the cord were finally made to meet on the top of the frame (c), were tied together, and sealed.

Over one end of the cage (A) was spread another piece of netting partly overlapping the first pieces and bound firmly to the frame in the same manner, the ends of the cord being sealed together near the other seal (c). The other end of the cage was left open for the medium to enter.

The contrivance was then fastened firmly to the bench. The test-fastenings, which alone will be described, consisted of four cords passing from the frame on each side (E, G, I, J) to spikes driven into the legs of the bench (as at F, H) and sealed to the wood. The netting which covered the end of the cage (A) was, moreover, nailed to the timber (K), each nail being sealed.

Rugs and a pillow being placed in the cage, the medium, clad in his overcoat, crawled in, and the open end was closed by a fourth piece of netting, secured to the frame by another cord, the ends of which were sealed together at D. This netting was not nailed to the bench at B, but could not be raised more than two inches without violence to the wirework.

The modes of escape from this cage were as follows:—

1. Break through the netting.
2. Make an aperture between the netting and the frame:—
 - (a) By untying the sealed knot, unravelling the cord from the meshes, and raising the netting from the spikes.
 - (b) By breaking the cord, unravelling it, and raising the netting.
 - (c) By untwisting the wire meshes, and thus freeing them from the cord. In doing this, however, the coating of zinc put on in the galvanizing process, and which filled the crevices of the twisted wire, must be broken.
3. Lift the cage from the bench:
 - (a) By breaking some cords.
 - (b) By disturbing the knots sealed to the spikes in the bench-posts.

As a last precaution flour was sprinkled on the ground for a considerable distance in front of the cage.

The medium was fastened in at ten o'clock, p.m., and we took our seats as in the first garden séance. After a short time a man's form, draped in white, appeared from behind the bushes, and bowed many times. A female figure afterwards approached us from the other side, heavily draped. These familiar manifestations were received with a murmur of pleasure.

Upon examining the cage, the network was found intact; all the seals and cords were unbroken; none of the meshes had been untwisted; no tracks were in the flour. From the nature of the position a confederate could not have entered the garden undetected.

This séance was a perfect test of the honesty of the medium in that instance, but it is chiefly interesting for a point of spirit physics, viz., that a wire network forms no

obstacle to a materialisation. The spirits only complained of the wooden frame. A more commodious cage on a simpler plan, without a clumsy wooden frame, would thus seem one of the best tests for proselytising purposes.

V.

On June 22nd another garden séance took place, which has already been described in the *Spiritualist* and *Medium*. Only the main points will be referred to here. No bush now interrupted our view of the medium. We saw the figure begin to form above him, and at the end of the séance dissolve to a cloud and disappear. The materialised spirit ("Joey") traversed the garden in various directions, going, in all, nearly 400 feet, and attained a distance, in a direct line from the medium, of sixty-six feet. We were informed that the farther the spirit went away, the greater the draught upon the medium, and the greater the difficulty of holding the matter together which formed the figure, and that this was the most remarkable manifestation of the kind that had ever taken place.

CURIOUS INSTANCE OF MENTAL PRESCIENCE.

In the current monthly part of *Chambers's Journal* (p. 776) a correspondent narrates the following incident which he says happened to him upwards of twenty years ago, and which shews, he thinks, that there is some mental law in operation that is as yet inexplicable:—

"At the time I have alluded to, I attended a church, among the members of which a certain question was then causing a great amount of excitement. Feeling ran very high, and meetings were called time after time to discuss the matter, which touched upon the acts of certain officials. An anti-official party was formed; and I took an active part in its movements. I thought a great injustice was being done, and I did all I could to right matters. Well, a meeting was called one evening in a room not connected with the church, and we malcontents were to be present to discuss the matters in dispute. Our clergyman was exceedingly anxious that party feeling should not run so high as to cause any rupture in the church. That anxiety on his part was put very strongly to me a few hours before the meeting, at which he was not expected to be present; hence I was exceedingly anxious that we should not do anything to give him, personally, any offence. I attended the meeting, having had to hurry from my business to be there in time, and had thus been six or seven hours without food. I mention this, as it may possibly have some bearing on my mental and nervous condition at the time.

"The meeting was an exciting one. I spoke in it. I know I had an excruciating headache; and when I sat down, another speaker followed. I listened to him for a minute or two, when, such was the pain in my head, that I rested it on my hand, and my elbow on my knee, and pressed my aching brow. I at once fell into a semi-unconscious state, or a kind of half-dream, call it what you like. I was perfectly unconscious of what was going on around me, though I felt I was in the meeting. In that state I saw, as in a vision, our clergyman walk in, and, of course, his presence under such circumstances created some little excitement. He told us why he had come, and, indeed, spoke, as I thought, for about a quarter of an hour, and then bowed himself out. On that, I again, as it were, came to myself.

"Now, to shew that I had only been an inappreciably small time in that semi-unconscious state, I may mention that I found that the same speaker was on his legs and that I had not lost a single sentence of what he said. Of course, up to that time our minister had not been in. But the marvellous part of the story is, that in a very short time afterwards, and whilst the same speaker was still addressing the meeting, the minister came in just as I had seen him in my 'vision,' and delivered precisely the same speech as I had heard him deliver when I was in the state described, and went out exactly as I had seen him do before!

"I don't attempt to offer any explanation of the fact, but give it as a curious instance of mental prescience."

MR. J. J. MORSE'S APPOINTMENTS.—LONDON: St. Andrew's Hall, Newman street, Oxford-street, W., January 7th, and every Sunday evening during January, February, and March, and also on Sunday, April 18th.—For terms and dates, direct Mr. Morse, at 53, Sigdon-road, Dalston, London, E.

THEOSOPHIC TEACHINGS.

By the Hon. Roden Noel.

No. IV.—Conclusion.

The writer of "Fragments" in his fifth instalment (*Theosophist*, November, 1882) appears to shift his ground regarding these "shells." We now hear of the members of a double consciousness, one of which is the shell. The possibility of such a double consciousness I have admitted. And my contention that the Ego must be behind both seems even here endorsed; for we read of the two both identifying themselves after death with the one earthly person.

If we are to take that view, then the shell would be the person himself, though not the complete person; but we had been assured that it was no such thing. And then what I should contend further is that, being an integral part of the Ego, this shell cannot perish, which we are assured it will.

Whatever view be taken (and to me the expositions given by inspired and uninspired "chelas" seem absolutely Protean in their ever shifting variety), I cannot but regard the doctrine as a rather clumsy, and prosaic stereotyping of what is only metaphorically true, true with qualification, and for a flowing, not too rigid, interpretation—the converse being also true—poured into the cast-iron moulds of dogma. Crystallised, the idea becomes a grotesque untruth. The idea is that of two natures in men—a new, and an old man—Adam and Christ, as Christians say. Certainly there are these, as most of us know to our cost. Certainly one may gradually die away, and so full vitality be secured for the other. But this great truth becomes a merely absurd curiosity of speculation, if you press the literal significance of the words unduly. The old man does not remain behind after I have put him off. All that was essential in him I have extracted and assimilated, and the rest is entirely unreal—so far from remaining behind by itself in some "ether"! And but one or two in an æon have put him off entirely here. If the bad habits are mine, I am in them. If I have left them off, they are in others, or nowhere. The elements of our nature "good," and "bad," however, are far too subtly intermingled, too essential to one another, pass too much into each other, to be thus sharply set apart.

Will it be said that the consciousness of a shell is after all not real, but only apparent, simulated? If this were said, I should answer that such a statement is utterly inconsistent with what the writer of the "Fragments" has written, and with the doctrine of "The Perfect Way" (see chapter on "Discerning of Spirits," and Mrs. Kingsford in "LIGHT" concerning the *Ruach*. And the "Fragments," in the September *Theosophist*). Here the distinction is drawn between two kinds of shells. The first kind, which it seems, is not called an "elementary," is thus described: "These shells consist of the fourth, and only a portion of the fifth principles. Half or more of the personal memory is gone, and the more animal or material instincts only survive." This is then said to be the "angel guide" of the average medium. "Such entities of course only survive for a time; gradually all consciousness departs, and they disintegrate." This is quite in accordance with "The Perfect Way." Thus, the shell proper is the lower part of the man himself, divorced from his higher part—his "fourth and fifth principles." "The man," as the world goes, "may have been a good man," and "yet the worse portions of his nature, his lower and more animal instincts, standing now alone and unneutralized by all the better portions of his character, may be evil enough." Again in "Letters of a Theosophist," No. II., in the same, we read, "The shells (as distinct from 'elementaries') are the barely intelligent, disintegrating reliques of human beings, sufficiently elevated to have taken away with them" "their best attributes."

And the statement in the November *Theosophist* is totally inconsistent with any such view of merely simulated consciousness. All this is plain enough. There is no question here of simulated consciousness—it is an actual portion of our own consciousness detached from the rest—to this, all my former criticisms apply. The "fourth and fifth principles" are distinctly, in the authorised exponents of this system, part and parcel of the conscious man, though they may be removed from him, like warts—and live on—which does not seem to us very feasible. But there is a good deal of shifting of position, and inconsistent explanations of the same terms, in this system of doctrine.

But I have only to refer to the first of my second series of papers in "LIGHT," to shew what I believe idealism is bound to hold concerning any apparently unconscious manifestation of consciousness and memory, either in "secondary reflex action" of the organism, or in the astral body. So far as it is the result of our organising action, and in a relationship of essential connection with our conscious life, it is noumenally, truly ours, and an integral element of our higher intuition, though not an element of our present, lower, phenomenal self-life. So far, again, as it belongs to the world external to us, it represents the consciousness of other spirits or Egos, co-operating with ours, not necessarily with phenomenal knowledge of the fact, but by virtue of their true being, in solidarity with our own, and the controlling power of higher Spirits, the Father and Son—Spirits at their head, who do know, and consciously cause such co-operation. Thus when we have thrown off the burden of direction in these departments of spontaneous, or automatic

habit, others take it up, and take it up to some extent because we have voluntarily imposed on them this bent—while they of course are only of full knowledge pursuing the course of their own purposes and development. Thus I would explain final causes, purpose in Nature, and instinct in animals, as well as the phenomena of reflex action, and habit. Even the direction imposed on other spirits by us essentially belongs to us. If the thoughts of other Egos represented by such a supposed astral body could be translated by us into the memories and habits of an individual, that would imply, as I have argued, the transcendent presence of this individual, else there would be no such memory of him possible in us, or suggestion of his personal memories through the shell, for it is admitted that he has influenced it to this result. We are in connection, then, necessarily with this individual Ego, and many others beside, with the latter at all events, in any such communications. Besides, there is always adaptation to present circumstances, intelligent answers to an understood question, often spontaneity of remark, however trivial, no mere reproduction of past memories, which implies a present conscious phenomenal individuality. But how a thinker of the calibre of "C. C. M." can lend his authority to the monstrous and materialistic theories of the book called "Mary Jane," even though it be in harmony with Eliphas Levi and the Occultists, passes my comprehension. Surely Frankenstein, and the Homunculus of Faust are reason itself, compared with such insanities of speculation! Of course I only know the book from your correspondent's report. If one had insight enough, possibly one might pick out and translate the past thoughts of one person from the minds of others, but it would be hard work! But I deny that the astral body we have constructed for ourselves can be divorced from us, and exist apart. Even if it did, it would have to be very carefully studied before its symbols could be translated into the past thoughts of the person to whom it belonged.

We cannot define too accurately—too prosaically—in these dim regions of metaphysic. These subjects are only partly for understanding. A higher faculty, belonging to the higher life, must see. And dogma belongs not to it. Good authorities believe that Gautama did not invent the metaphysical system ascribed to him, any more than our Lord invented the Pauline theology. These highest Teachers breathed in a loftier region altogether. And when we translate their chiefly ethical intuitions into a myriad logical conceptions of the understanding, we do not expand, but degrade them—though the process may be a necessary one for us. No system will fit the universe—though fragments of it may doubtless be reflected in many. The universe is God's thought—and we are not God.

The apparition of the "Double," implying the projection of the astral body, may conceivably take place when the one person is equally conscious of being present bodily in more than one place. A thought of being present in a place is sometimes enough to cause a bodily appearance in it of the person thinking. But is he then also conscious of being where his physical body is? He might be so. But if not, how far is he there? I suppose very little. Again in dreams, or in remembrance, the person dreamed of, or remembered, is not probably always conscious of so influencing the dreamer or rememberer to dream of, or remember him. And yet I hold that such remembrance were not possible without such influence. Hence I seem to be driven to postulate a severance of phenomenal consciousness from the transcendent consciousness of the same person. And it may be said that this is virtually to admit the plurality in our one consciousness, which I object to in Occultism. But then I postulate the one transcendent consciousness of the true noumenal Ego of each behind these plural phenomenal conscious lives, and the synthetic unity in each. But that is not admitted at all in the case of the "shell." There is the difference. Moreover the "shell" involves that severance of parts and functions of our nature from one another, which I hold to be impossible, because they imply one another, as I explain in my first series, and also here. Hence this psychology seems to me crude and unphilosophical. Even the plurality I seem driven to postulate I only admit provisionally, for I confess even this may appear to savour of the absurd! Metempsychosis I grant, but see no probability of its being in the same physical, mundane sphere of the five senses. True, we have lost the memory of our past lives, and so it might be argued that we may again. But then we may have gradually ascended in the scale of being, and our individuality may now have become so pronounced that we shall not again lose memory.

A kind of conditional immortality would be thus virtually admitted—if possible degradation, or insufficient development be predicable of some amongst us. Only this would be temporary only, and all would eventually recover the full privilege of their Divine Birthright, and the memory of all their past lives. Love, Justice, and Righteousness, cannot be satisfied without this. Our true being is in God; and we probably descended (involved in the fall of our inorbing earth-angel Lucifer) as we are now ascending. Such fall is indeed Incarnation, subjection to matter; but this may be either voluntary for redemption of brethren, or involuntary; though originally I believe it was all voluntary, for we in God saw the reason of it. With this I hope to deal more fully elsewhere.

The idea of Wordsworth's great ode is also to be entertained as a possibility—that we descended direct from God; in that case memory would necessarily be lost of that former state of Nirvana,

or intuitional perfection. That conception is certainly true, even if we have passed through other degraded lives before, through the animal and subhuman spheres. Plato's "Reminiscence" is true. We are already familiar with the first principles of reason and conduct. Ideas commend themselves to us when we first hear them, and it is because they are native to us. In eternity they are ever before us, as self-luminous, essential Verities, though wandering from our beautiful Home we lose remembrance of them for awhile.

And now, while apologising for my "portentous" length, I take leave of the subject, hoping that the topics incidentally, as well as directly dealt with by my friendly opponent and myself have not been without their interest and profit. By all means let us demand "facts" more or less sensational, but let us occasionally pause to digest them and estimate their value.

A DREAM FULFILLED.

Not long ago a house was being built next to the one I was then living in, and carpenters were at the time engaged in putting up the roof, when I dreamed that one of them would fall, the spot at which he would fall being distinctly portrayed, and the most singular part of it was that in my dream I was told to tell my wife what I had seen. Therefore, while dressing in the morning, I told her the dream, finishing my narrative with the remark that "I was told to tell her." The day following being market day, and a busy one, I had forgotten all about the matter until about four o'clock, when I ran in to see if anything had occurred. On getting to the top room of the house I was immediately told that a carpenter had just fallen with a piece of timber from the roof. The timber falling under him, he had alighted upon it on his back, otherwise he must have gone through between the joists, but the timber saved him, beyond a good shaking. The place he fell corresponded exactly with the one I saw in my dream. For what purpose this dream was given to me I could never see. Perhaps some of your readers may throw a "light" upon it.

J. F. YOUNG.

Trafalgar House, Llanelly, S. Wales.

PROPOSED CONCERT AND BALL.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—It has been proposed by several friends that a concert and ball similar to those which have taken place at Claremont Hall in the last two years, should be held during the present month.

I shall be very pleased to receive offers of assistance from those friends who are willing to take part in the vocal and instrumental part of the entertainment. The proceeds, if any, will be devoted to some useful purpose connected with Spiritualism.

Trusting that the proposal will find favour with your readers, I remain yours faithfully,

FRANK EVERITT.

26, Penton-street,
January 1st, 1883.

"LIGHT" FUND.

Amount already acknowledged	...	...	£201	3	8
Dr. Berks T. Hutchinson	...	...	0	17	0
Mrs. B.	...	...	1	1	0
S. M.	...	...	1	0	0

METROPOLITAN SPIRITUAL LYCEUM.—The reception to Mrs. Hardinge Britten at the St. Andrew's Hall, Newman-street, W., has been fixed for Friday next, the 12th instant, instead of Wednesday, the 10th instant, as announced in last week's "LIGHT." The admission will be free, but the Council of the Metropolitan Lyceum hope that friends will generously support the work of the Lyceum, by subscriptions or donations towards its funds. Full particulars of the meetings will be found in our advertising columns.

MR. MORSE AT CARDIFF.—On Sunday last the controls of Mr. J. J. Morse delivered two lectures in this town. The subject in the morning was "The Life of Faith and the Life of Work," and in the evening, "The Science of Spiritualism." These were the last lectures we shall have the privilege of hearing from Mr. Morse's controls for a time, and I wish to take this opportunity of expressing the high regard in which Mr. Morse's work here, extending over a period of about eight years, is held. During this time hundreds have listened with deep interest to the clear reasoning and methodical arrangement of argument, while they have likewise been also enchanted by the unimpeded flow of ideas beautifully expressed. On New Year's night a "Happy Evening" was given at the Society's hall. The programme consisted of selections by an excellent band of local amateur instrumentalists, conducted by Mr. Francis Cooper, songs and solos by various members and friends, ventriloquial sketches, magic lantern, &c. Mr. Morse ably filled the chair, and during the evening read in excellent style the defence of Sergeant Buzfuz in "Bardell versus Pickwick." The refreshment stall was ably managed by Mesdames Cooper, Sadler, and Brooks, and a carpet dance brought an agreeable evening to a close.—E.A.

TESTIMONY TO PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

The following is a list of eminent persons who, after personal investigation, have satisfied themselves of the reality of some of the phenomena generally known as Psychical or Spiritualistic.

N.B.—An asterisk is prefixed to those who have exchanged belief for knowledge.

SCIENCE.—The Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, F.R.S., President R.A.S.; W. Crookes, Fellow and Gold Medallist of the Royal Society; C. Varley, F.R.S., C.E.; A. R. Wallace, the eminent Naturalist; W. F. Barrett, F.R.S.E., Professor of Physics in the Royal College of Science, Dublin; Dr. Lockhart Robertson; *Dr. J. Elliotson, F.R.S., sometime President of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London; *Professor de Morgan, sometime President of the Mathematical Society of London; *Dr. Wm. Gregory, F.R.S.E., sometime Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh; *Dr. Ashburner, *Mr. Rutter, *Dr. Herbert Mayo, F.R.S., &c., &c.

*Professor F. Zöllner, of Leipzig, author of "Transcendental Physics," &c.; Professors G. T. Fechner, Scheibner, and J. H. Fichte, of Leipzig; Professor W. E. Weber, of Göttingen; Professor Hoffman, of Würzburg; Professor Perty, of Berne; Professors Wagner and Butleroff, of Petersburg; Professors Hare and Mapes, of U.S.A.; Dr. Robert Friese, of Breslau; Mons. Camille Flammarion, Astronomer, &c., &c.

LITERATURE.—The Earl of Dunraven; T. A. Trollope; S. C. Hall; Gerald Massey; Captain R. Burton; Professor Cassal, LL.D.; *Lord Brougham; *Lord Lytton; *Lord Lyndhurst; *Archbishop Whately; *Dr. R. Chambers, F.R.S.E.; *W. M. Thackeray; *Nassau Senior; *George Thompson; *W. Howitt; *Serjeant Cox; *Mrs. Browning, Hon. Roden Noel, &c., &c.

Bishop Clarke, Rhode Island, U.S.A.; Darius Lyman, U.S.A.; Professor W. Denton; Professor Alex. Wilder; Professor Hiram Corson; Professor George Bush; and twenty-four Judges and ex-Judges of the U.S. Courts; Victor Hugo; Baron and Baroness von Vay; *W. Lloyd Garrison, U.S.A.; *Hon. R. Dale Owen, U.S.A.; *Hon. J. W. Edmonds, U.S.A.; *Epes Sargent; *Baron du Potet; *Count A. de Gasparin; *Baron L. de Guldenstubbé, &c., &c.

SOCIAL POSITION.—H.I.H. Nicholas, Duke of Leuchtenberg; H.S.H. the Prince of Solms; H.S.H. Prince Albrecht of Solms; *H.S.H. Prince Emile of Sayn Wittgenstein; Hon. Alexander Aksakof, Imperial Councillor of Russia; the Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan, sometime Minister of U.S.A. at the Court of Lisbon; M. Favre-Clavairoz, late Consul-General of France at Trieste; the late Emperors of *Russia and *France; Presidents *Thiers and *Lincoln, &c., &c.

Is it Conjuring?

It is sometimes confidently alleged that mediums are only clever conjurers, who easily deceive the simple-minded and unwary. But how, then, about the conjurers themselves, some of the most accomplished of whom have declared that the "manifestations" are utterly beyond the resources of their art?—

ROBERT HOUDIN, the great French conjurer, investigated the subject of clairvoyance with the sensitive, Alexis Didier. In the result he unreservedly admitted that what he had observed was wholly beyond the resources of his art to explain. See "Psychische Studien" for January, 1878, p. 43.

PROFESSOR JACOBS, writing to the editor of *Licht, Mehr Licht*, April 10th, 1881, in reference to phenomena which occurred in Paris through the Brothers Davenport, said:—"As a Prestidigitator of repute, and a sincere Spiritualist, I affirm that the medianimic facts demonstrated by the two brothers were absolutely true, and belonged to the Spiritualistic order of things in every respect. Messrs. Robin and Robert Houdin, when attempting to imitate these said facts, never presented to the public anything beyond an infantine and almost grotesque parody of the said phenomena, and it would be only ignorant and obstinate persons who could regard the questions seriously as set forth by these gentlemen. . . . Following the data of the learned chemist and natural philosopher, Mr. W. Crookes, of London, I am now in a position to prove plainly, and by purely scientific methods, the existence of a 'psychic force' in mesmerism and also 'the individuality of the spirit' in Spiritual manifestation."

SAMUEL BELLACHINI, COURT CONJURER, AT BERLIN.—I hereby declare it to be a rash action to give decisive judgment upon the objective medial performance of the American medium, Mr. Henry Slade, after only one sitting and the observations so made. After I had, at the wish of several highly esteemed gentlemen of rank and position, and also for my own interest, tested the physical mediumship of Mr. Slade, in a series of sittings by full daylight, as well as in the evening in his bedroom, I must, for the sake of truth, hereby certify that the phenomenal occurrences with Mr. Slade have been thoroughly examined by me with the minutest observation and investigation of his surroundings, including the table, and that I have not in the smallest degree found anything to be produced by means of prestidigitative manifestations, or by mechanical apparatus; and that any explanation of the experiments which took place under the circumstances and conditions then obtaining by any reference to prestidigitation is absolutely impossible. It must rest with such men of science as Crookes and Wallace, in London; Perty, in Berne; Butleroff, in St. Petersburg; to search for the explanation of this phenomenal power, and to prove its reality. I declare, moreover, the published opinions of laymen as to the "How" of this subject to be premature, and, according to my view and experience, false and one-sided. This, my declaration, is signed and executed before a Notary and witnesses.—(Signed) SAMUEL BELLACHINI, Berlin, December 6th, 1877.

ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

The Conduct of Circles.—By M.A. (Oxon.)

If you wish to see whether Spiritualism is really only jugglery and imposture, try it by personal experiment.

If you can get an introduction to some experienced Spiritualist, on whose good faith you can rely, ask him for advice; and, if he is holding private circles, seek permission to attend one to see how to conduct séances, and what to expect.

There is, however, difficulty in obtaining access to private circles, and, in any case, you must rely chiefly on experiences in your own family circle, or amongst your own friends, all strangers being excluded. The bulk of Spiritualists have gained conviction thus.

Form a circle of from four to eight persons, half, or at least two, of negative, passive temperament, and preferably of the female sex; the rest of a more positive type.

Sit, positive and negative alternately, secure against disturbance, in subdued light, and in comfortable and unconstrained positions, round an uncovered table of convenient size. Place the palms of the hands flat upon its upper surface. The hands of each sitter need not touch those of his neighbour, though the practice is frequently adopted.

Do not concentrate attention too fixedly on the expected manifestations. Engage in cheerful but not frivolous conversation. Avoid dispute or argument. Scepticism has no deterrent effect, but a bitter spirit of opposition in a person of determined will may totally stop or decidedly impede manifestations. If conversation flags, music is a great help, if it be agreeable to all, and not of a kind to irritate the sensitive ear. Patience is essential; and it may be necessary to meet ten or twelve times, at short intervals, before anything occurs. If after such trial you still fail, form a fresh circle. Guess at the reason of your failure, eliminate the inharmonious elements, and introduce others. An hour should be the limit of an unsuccessful séance.

The first indications of success usually are a cool breeze passing over the hands, with involuntary twitching of the hands and arms of some of the sitters, and a sensation of throbbing in the table. These indications, at first so slight as to cause doubt as to their reality, will usually develop with more or less rapidity.

If the table moves, let your pressure be so gentle on its surface that you are sure you are not aiding its motions. After some time you will probably find that the movement will continue if your hands are held over but not in contact with it. Do not, however, try this until the movement is assured, and be in no hurry to get messages.

When you think that the time has come, let some one take command of the circle and act as spokesman. Explain to the unseen Intelligence that an agreed code of signals is desirable, and ask that a tilt may be given as the alphabet is slowly repeated at the several letters which form the word that the Intelligence wishes to spell. It is convenient to use a single tilt for No, three for Yes, and two to express doubt or uncertainty.

When a satisfactory communication has been established, ask if you are rightly placed, and if not, what order you should take. After this, ask who the Intelligence purports to be, which of the company is the medium, and such relevant questions. If confusion occurs, ascribe it to the difficulty that exists in directing the movements at first with exactitude. Patience will remedy this, if there be a real desire on the part of the Intelligence to speak with you. If you only satisfy yourself at first that it is possible to speak with an Intelligence separate from that of any person present, you will have gained much.

The signals may take the form of raps. If so, use the same code of signals, and ask as the raps become clear that they may be made on the table, or in a part of the room where they are demonstrably not produced by any natural means, but avoid any vexatious imposition of restrictions on free communication. Let the Intelligence use its own means; if the attempt to communicate deserves your attention, it probably has something to say to you, and will resent being hampered by useless interference. It rests greatly with the sitters to make the manifestations elevating or frivolous, and even tricky.

Should an attempt be made to entrance the medium, or to manifest by any violent methods, or by means of form-manifestations, ask that the attempt may be deferred till you can secure the presence of some experienced Spiritualist. If this request is not heeded, discontinue the sitting. The process of developing a trance-medium is one that might disconcert an inexperienced inquirer. Increased light will check noisy manifestations.

Lastly—Try the results you get by the light of Reason. Maintain a level head and a clear judgment. Do not believe everything you are told, for though the great unseen world contains many a wise and discerning Spirit, it also has in it the accumulation of human folly, vanity, and error; and this lies nearer to the surface than that which is wise and good. Distrust the free use of great names. Never for a moment abandon the use of your Reason. Do not enter into a very solemn investigation in a spirit of idle curiosity or frivolity. Cultivate a reverent desire for what is pure, good, and true. You will be repaid if you gain only a well-grounded conviction that there is a life after death, for which a pure and good life before death is the best and wisest preparation.